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NEWS RELEASE

INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED PIANIST TO SHARE PERFORMANCE SKILLS WITH STUDENTS AT UD

DAYTON, Ohio — The setting: Australia's Hobart Town Hall in Tasmania on a beautiful summer evening in 1996. Internationally acclaimed concert pianist Jon Kimura Parker is deep into the final flourishes of a Mozart concerto cadenza when, without warning (even to his orchestra), he breaks into the *X Files* television show theme.

"I couldn't resist," said Parker, whose passion for playing is matched by his love of entertaining — which sometimes includes a comedic bent. "Most of the orchestra quietly went into hysterics, and most of the audience had no idea that anything had happened."

Hailed by critics as one of the world's leading classical pianists, Parker will share his performance technique, tips and energy with students in a master class setting at the University of Dayton.

The class will be from 4 to 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 22, in Sears Recital Hall in the Jesse Philips Humanities Center. The session is open to the public and admission is \$5. Reservations, preferred but not required, can be made by calling Gloria Pugh at the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra at (937) 224-3521.

The master class is sponsored by the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra in conjunction with Parker's DPO winter concert. He will perform Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini — which he described as "music to swoon over" — at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 23, at Memorial Hall. For ticket information, call the DPO box office at (937) 224-4000.

A native Canadian and self-proclaimed ambassador of music, Parker has given two command performances for Queen Elizabeth II and performed for members of the United States Supreme Court and prime ministers of Canada and Japan.

His last two seasons have included performances at Carnegie Hall, Chicago's Orchestra Hall, the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, London's Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Sydney Opera House.

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During that time, the versatile artist also played himself on a Disney Channel children's television show, jammed with Doc Severinson and the original Tonight Show Orchestra, gave an impromptu concert at the Victoria Falls Hotel while on safari in Zimbabwe, and toured the Canadian Arctic, performing the music of Beethoven, Chopin, and rock artists Nirvana and Alanis Morissette for more than 1,000 Inuit students.

At UD, Parker will work with piano performance student Lauren Tucker, a junior, as well as one student to be named from Wright State University and Daniel Wannemacher of Beavercreek High School, who was recently named runner-up in DPO's Young Musicians Concerto Competition. Each student will have the opportunity to perform for and receive feedback from Parker.

Eric Street, professor of music and director of keyboard studies at UD, said he is excited about Parker's visit to campus.

"We're very fortunate to be able to have Mr. Parker here at UD through the generosity of the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra," Street said. "It will be a wonderful opportunity to see a great artist close up.

"I saw him a couple of years ago when he played Rachmaninoff's Third Concerto with the philharmonic, and he was brilliant. His performance was passionate and technically superb, and it was the most satisfying performance of that piece I've ever heard.

"Mr. Parker plays with a lot of energy, which is one of the pleasures in watching him perform," Street added. "I hope the students will be inspired by the mastery he displays in his playing."

Parker also said he is looking forward to working with the master class students at UD.

"In a master class there's so little time, so what I try to do is find the essence of what needs attention and talk about that," Parker said. "I find that even with extraordinary teaching, many young players have difficulty with perspective because they're used to hearing opinions from only one source. So I hope to bring an element of freshness to a class if I can.

"I'm also wildly enthusiastic about sharing what I know, and that usually comes across as well."